

MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY

DEFINITIONS

ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY

APPENDIX I

Effective 3-1-2010

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Definitions

Adult

A person who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, or who has been convicted of a crime as an adult under any Federal, State or tribal law.

Applicant

A person or family that has applied for housing assistance.

Arrested

Taking or seizing a person by legal authority, such as the police, in response to a criminal charge.

Black

A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as "Black, African American, or provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.

Child/Minor

Means a member of the family other than the family head or spouse who is under eighteen (18) years of age.

Complainant

Any resident who files a grievance with the MDPHA site manager of the development where the resident's unit is located.

Continuity of Assistance

A family is considered continuously assisted if it has been receiving housing assistance under any program of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 without experiencing an extended interruption during the occupancy of the assisted unit. An interruption of four (4) months between the assisted occupancy of one unit and the assisted occupancy of another unit is considered discontinued assistance.

Convicted

Found or proved guilty of an offense or crime by the verdict of a court. A person who served a sentence of imprisonment.

Criminal Records

All criminal arrest records, including but not limited to sex offender registration records for all family members 18 years and over. MDPHA will conduct such checks on household members who are younger than 18 years if they are being tried as adults for certain criminal offenses. If MDPHA discovers the family has a history of failure to comply with lease terms under previous landlords or fails the background check The term "criminal records" does not include records unavailable to MDPHA by operation of law, including sealed or expunged records, juvenile records, exempt records under Florida's Public Records Act, or other records unavailable to MDPHA under state and federal laws.

Deconcentration of Income

The admission of higher income families (50-80% of area median income) to developments where lower income families (30% of area median income) predominate and vice versa.

Displaced persons

Include persons who can document that they have been displaced by a natural disaster declared by the President of the United States, displaced, through no fault of their own, by governmental action, or displaced by domestic violence.

Due Process

An eviction action or a termination of tenancy in a State or local court in which the following procedural safeguard are required:

1. Adequate notice to the tenant of the grounds for terminating the tenancy and for eviction;
2. Right of the tenant to be represented by counsel;
3. Opportunity for the tenant to refute the evidence presented by the PHA including the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses or equitable defense which the tenant may have;
4. A hearing before an impartial person(s).
5. A written decision of the merits.

Earnings and benefits

Means the incremental earnings and benefits resulting from a qualifying employment training program or subsequent job.

Dating Violence

The violence between individuals who have or have had a continuing and significant relationship of a romantic or intimate nature. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the consideration of the following factors:

- A dating relationship must have existed within the past 6 months;
- The nature of the relationship must have been characterized by the expectation of affection or sexual involvement between the parties; and
- The frequency and type of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship must have included that the persons have been involved over time and on a continuous basis during the course of the relationship.

The term does not include violence in a casual acquaintanceship or violence between individuals who only have engaged in ordinary fraternization in a business or social context.

Dependent

A member of the family (excluding foster children, foster adults, or live-in aides) other than the family head or spouse, who is under eighteen (18) years of age, or is a person with disabilities, or is a Full-time Student.

Disabled Family

A family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person with disabilities; or two (2) or more persons with disabilities living together; or one (1) or more persons with disabilities living with one or more live-in aides.

Disability Assistance Expenses

Reasonable expenses that are anticipated, during the period for which Annual Income is computed, for attendant care and auxiliary apparatus for a Disabled Family member and that are necessary to enable the disabled member to be employed, provided that the expenses are neither paid to a member of the family nor reimbursed by an outside source.

Displaced Family

A family in which each member, or whose sole member, is a person displaced by governmental action, or a person whose dwelling has been extensively damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster declared or otherwise formally recognized pursuant to Federal disaster relief laws.

Domestic violence

The "actual or threatened physical violence directed against one or more members of the applicant's family by a spouse or other members of the applicant's household." The State of Florida defines domestic violence as any assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault, sexual battery, stalking, aggravated stalking, kidnapping, false imprisonment, or any criminal offense resulting in physical injury or death of one family or household member by another who is or was residing in the same single dwelling unit.

Drug-related Criminal Activity

Illegal manufacture, sale, distribution, or use of a drug, or possession of a drug, with the intent to manufacture, sell, distribute or use the drug.

Elderly Family

A Family whose head, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least sixty two (62) years of age; or two or more persons who are at least sixty two (62) years of age living together; or one or more persons who are at least sixty two (62) years of age living with one or more live-in aides.

Elderly Person

A person sixty-two (62) years of age or older.

Eligibility Income

This is Annual Income amount which is compared to USHUD approved Income Limits to determine if an applicant family is eligible for admission to the housing program.

Family

Family includes but is not limited to:

- A family with or without children (the temporary absence of a child from the home due to placement in foster care shall not be considered in determining family composition and family size);
- An elderly family;
- A near-elderly family;
- A disabled family;
- A displaced family;
- The remaining member of a tenant family; and
- A single person who is not an elderly or displaced person, or a person with disabilities, or the remaining member of a tenant family.
- A single person or a group of persons who reside together and who are related by blood or marriage, or who exhibit a stable familial relationship. MDPHA will accept documentation proving that adult, domestic partners have a stable relationship (e.g. they have lived together for at least one year).

Family Income

Family Income means the Annual Income derived from all sources of the family members expected to reside in the dwelling unit and upon which rent is to be based.

Full-Time Student

A person registered for and carrying a subject load that is considered full-time for day students under the standards and practices of the educational institution attended. An educational institution includes a vocational school with a diploma or certificate program, as well as an institution offering a college degree.

Fraud

Deceit or trickery deliberately practiced to gain some advantage dishonestly. Fraud is an intentional deception and is not committed accidentally.

Good Cause

With respect to refusal of a housing offer, 'good cause' shall mean that an applicant who is offered a unit can demonstrate through objective evidence that a move into the unit offered would result in a hardship related to the ability of the applicant or a member of the applicant's family to retain his or her employment or retain particular day care or medical services uniquely suited to the affected individual's needs or the unit offered is located outside of an applicant's preferred geographical zone. In addition, a hardship may relate to the person's inability to conveniently use the facility because of his or her disability and a lack of the necessary accessibility features. Additional examples of good cause are included in this policy.

Grievance or complaint

Any dispute with respect to the Agency's action or failure to act in accordance with lease requirements, and/or federal regulations which may adversely affect the tenant's rights, duties, welfare, or housing status.

Head of Household

The family member who is 18 years or older and held responsible and accountable for the family, normally considered to be the official tenant of record or the lessee.

Hearing

An informal proceeding at which a resident's grievance or complaint relating to MDPHA's adverse action or decision, is heard in order to insure that the complainant's rights were not violated

Homeless Family

Any person or family who:

- Lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence; or
- Has a primary night-time residence that is:
 1. A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing); or
 2. An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
 3. A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

A homeless family does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to an Act of the Congress or a State law.

Homeownership Opportunities

After October 28, 1998 any homeownership opportunities shall mean any homeownership units developed, purchased, or redeveloped by Miami-Dade County solely or as a joint venture with any other entity.

Income Eligibility for Admission

At least 40% of families admitted to the Public Housing program in each fiscal year must have incomes that do not exceed 30% of Area Median Income (AMI). In each fiscal year MDPHA may reduce the targeted public housing admissions to the extent that MDPHA provides tenant-based Section 8 assistance above the targeted 75% to families that do not exceed 30% of AMI. The public housing target, however, may not be reduced below 30% of admissions.

Income Limits

Income limits are those published by USHUD for admission of Low-Income and Very-Low-Income families to federally subsidized housing developments.

Interim Adjustments or Re-determination of Rents

Changes in rent between admission and subsequent annual re-examinations due to a change in family composition or income.

Live-in Aide

A person eighteen (18) years of age or older who resides with one (1) or more elderly persons, or near-elderly persons, or persons with disabilities who:

- Is determined to be essential to the care and well-being of the persons;
- Is not obligated for the support of the persons; and
- Would not be living in the unit except to provide the necessary supportive services.
- The live-in aide's income is not counted when determining family income.

Local Preference

Any preference, to the extent authorized by law, the Agency may establish for use in selecting among applicants that respond to local housing needs and priorities.

Lower Income Family

A family whose Annual Income does not exceed eighty percent (80%) of the median family income for the area, as determined by USHUD with adjustments for smaller and larger families.

Medical Expenses

Those medical expenses, including medical insurance premiums that are anticipated during the period for which annual income is computed, and that are not reimbursed by insurance or other sources.

Minimum Rent

Statutory requirement that each family assisted under Public Housing programs pay a monthly minimum rent or Total Tenant Payment (TTP) of \$50.00, subject to hardship exemption waiver, if applicable.

Monthly Income

One-twelfth of Annual Income

Monthly Adjusted Income

One-twelfth of Adjusted Annual Income

Near-Elderly Family

A family whose head of household, spouse, or sole member is a person who is at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62; or two or more persons, who are at least 50 years of age but below the age of 62, living with one or more live-in aides.

Net Family Assets

Net cash value after deducting reasonable costs that would be incurred in disposing of real property, savings, stocks, bonds, and other forms of capital investment, excluding interests in Indian trust land and excluding equity accounts in USHUD homeownership programs. The value of any business or family assets disposed of by an applicant or tenant for less than fair market value during the two years preceding the date of application for the program or reexamination shall be included in the determination of Net Family Assets.

New Affordable Desegregative Rental Housing

After October 28, 1998 any affordable desegregative rental housing developments developed, purchased or redeveloped by Miami-Dade County solely or as a joint venture with any other entity. This includes the redevelopment of public housing.

Non-Black

All individuals who are not 'Black' as defined above including, but not limited to, Caucasians and Caucasians of Hispanic ethnicity, American Indians and Asians.

Non-Elderly Family

Two (2) or more persons who are not elderly but live together and are related by blood, or marriage, or operation of law, or give evidence of a stable relationship which has lasted over a period of at least one year. All Family Income and resources are available to meet the family's needs.

Non-Violent Criminal Activity:

Any criminal activity that is not a Violent Criminal Activity or a Drug-related Criminal Activity, as defined herewith, but that is such that it may threaten the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. Non-violent criminal activities include but are not limited to fraud, bribery, vandalism, burglary, larceny, robbery, etc.

Offer

The term 'offer' is used in the context of project-based assistance and means an offer of a unit that is vacant, appropriate for the household in size and type, and meets applicable housing quality standards.

Participating Privately Owned Assisted Housing

Housing receiving federal assistance under one of the following statutory provisions for which the owner has agreed, upon invitation from USHUD, to participate in the activities of the Housing Center:

- Section 221(d)(3) of the National Housing Act;
- Section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965;
- Section 236 of the National Housing Act;
- Section 202 of the National Housing Act;
- Section 811 of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act; or
- Section 8 of the United States Housing Act

Person with Disabilities

Under federal discrimination law, an individual is disabled if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment. This definition does not include any individual who is a drug addict and is currently using illegal drugs, or an alcoholic, who poses a direct threat to the health, safety and right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.

Reasonable Accommodation

A reasonable accommodation is a change, modification, alteration, or adaptation in a policy, procedure, practice, program, facility or unit that provides a person with a disability the opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, a program (housing or non-housing), service or activity.

Re-examination/Re-certification Date

The date on which any rent change is effective as required by the annual re-examination of eligibility for continued occupancy.

Sexual Assault

The threat of oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object, without consent.

Sexual Battery

The actual oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object, without consent.

Single Person

A person living alone or intending to live alone and who does not qualify as an Elderly Family, Disabled Family, Displaced Person, or as the remaining member of a tenant family.

Stalking

The willful malicious, and repeated following, harassing, or cyber stalking of another person, and/or the making of a credible threat with the intent to place that person in reasonable fear of death or bodily injury of the person, or the person's child, sibling, spouse, parent, or dependent.

Tenant Error

Occurs when the tenant, by action or inaction, breaches a lease, regulation or program requirement, because of a misunderstanding of rules. Tenant errors are considered unintentional program violations as compared to fraud (see definition).

Tenant Rent

The amount payable monthly by the Family as rent to the Public Housing Agency. Where all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are supplied by the Agency, Tenant Rent equals the Total Tenant Payment (TTP). Where some or all utilities (except telephone) and other essential housing services are not supplied by the Agency and the cost thereof is not included in the amount paid as rent to the Agency, Tenant Rent equals Total Tenant Payment less the Utility Allowance.

Total Tenant Payment

Total Tenant Payment for any dwelling unit shall be the highest of the following, rounded to the nearest dollar:

- Thirty percent (30%) of Monthly Adjusted Income;
- Ten percent (10%) of Monthly Income;
- The monthly portion of a Family's Welfare Assistance from a public agency specifically designated by such agency to meet the Family's housing costs; or
- The MDPHA statutory minimum rent which is currently \$50, subject to hardship exemption waiver, if applicable.

Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) Unit

A dwelling unit that is designed, constructed, altered or adapted to comply with Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) and is located in accessible route.

Units with Accessible Features

A unit which has been altered in a manner that has some accessible features that assists persons with disabilities (see also UFAS unit).

Utility Allowance

If the cost of utilities (except telephone) for an assisted unit is not included in the Tenant Rent but is the responsibility of the family occupying the unit, the Utility Allowance is the amount equal to the estimate made of the monthly costs of a reasonable consumption of such utilities for the unit, consistent with the requirements of a safe, sanitary, and healthful living environment based on an annual review of utility rates. The estimate made must be approved by USHUD. The resident may also request relief from excess utility consumption (see Section 4-1 (B) (iv) regarding the excess consumption policy).

Utility Reimbursement

The amount, if applicable, by which the utility allowance for the unit exceeds the Total Tenant Payment for the Family occupying the unit.

Very Low Income Family

A family who's Annual Income does not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the median family income for the area, as determined by USHUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families.

Violent Criminal Activity

Any criminal activity that has as one of its elements the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force substantial enough to cause, or be reasonable likely to cause, serious bodily injury or property damage.

Waiting List

The list of applicants who are waiting to be verified eligible for admittance to housing programs administered by MDPHA and offered the benefit as it becomes available.